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ancestral ghosts around whose cult the ritual which takes place in the dancing-ground centres.

Turning our backs now on the Lower Side, let us, with the aid of the panoramic view seen in the Frontispiece and Plates II and III, survey the high place where the chief sacrifices take place. From end to end the ground is about 300 feet long. Along the whole of the Upper Side, built on the slight elevation which forms one side of the valley, is a continuous platform of coral blocks carefully fitted together, rising to a height of 10 to 12 feet from the ground. This, though in appearance a continuous structure, is in fact a succession of contiguous stone-platforms on which the most important tusked boars are sacrificed.[1] On the extreme left is the enormous banyan tree already mentioned, some of the aerial roots of which have been carved away so as to form a kind of cave within the tree, where, on a part of the stone-platform rather lower than the rest, cannibal feasts were formerly held.

To the right of this in front of the stone-platform is a small dolmen and other upright stones, and to the right of these again stands proudly the orchestra of upright slit gongs, huge trunks of forest trees transported from the mainland, hollowed out through a longitudinal slit so as to leave only a thin shell of the original trunk. Above the slit is carved an image representing the face of the ancestral ghost, whose voice speaks when the gong is sounded by hitting one side of the slit with a soft-wood stick. The nose of the image is pierced, and from it hang the jaws of the tusked pigs sacrificed in its honour on the day of consecration. The tallest of these gongs is about 12 feet high, not counting the base buried in the ground. Since no sacred object is ever removed, but simply allowed to rot where it stood, the remains of old gongs are also seen, two leaning to the right, one lying in front, now used as a seat for casual use. Four different sizes of gongs go to make up an orchestra, and the complicated and indescribably stirring rhythms they beat out are the wonder of all who have the good fortune to hear them.[2]

Beyond the gongs, supported on three stakes, is a rack displaying the jaws of tusked pigs recently sacrificed in one of the innumerable performances that go to make up the protracted Maki rite. To the right of this is another small dolmen, and beyond this again is a cylindrical cane structure set up to protect a special yam and banana tree planted during the mortuary rites for an old man.[3]

To the right of these again are three large dolmens. These, as will be described later,[4] were erected at successive performances of the Maki rite (as in the case of gongs, no sacred stone object is ever removed), and are the stone altars at which other important tusked pigs are sacrificed.

[1] For details of the sacrifices performed here and at the other stones see pp. 413 ff., 430.
[2] For details see pp. 311 ff.
[3] See p. 550.
[4] See p. 414.

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dwelling-enclosures of the Lodge members clustered close around. As the cemeteries where old men are buried increased in size, and as, moreover, the number of burials of young men, women and children inside their dwelling-houses grew also, the original sites tended to be abandoned and new Lodges and cemeteries (such as that of the existing *La-mbet-ra* shown on the plan), as well as new dwelling-houses, began to be built rather further afield. This tendency has not, however, reached the point achieved in the Atchin double-village of Ruruar, which, as will be shown in a later volume, has now become so decentralised that the dwelling-enclosures form a kind of irregular ring round the site of the original village, which is now occupied exclusively by the cemeteries with their accompanying Lodges.

Women's Lodges

While the above account refers almost exclusively to the overt patrilineal organisation of the island, it is of interest to note the existence at the same time of Women's Lodges recorded by Godefroy on Vao, but not existing, so far as I know, elsewhere in the Small Islands.

Referring to a "large carefully guarded enclosure at the base of a slope" in which there are "five or six houses, well kept and with the ground around them carefully cleaned and even swept," Godefroy says: [1] "This collection of houses so carefully fenced . . . is strictly reserved for women. It is there that the matrons of Pete-hul and of Togh-vanu receive women of these same clans when they are about to give birth. The midwife of these two clans is assisted by their close relatives,[2] and together they give, or rather lavish care upon them over a period of three weeks. At the end of this time the mother or the grandmother of the woman who has given birth to the child comes, with other relatives, to take away the mother and her baby and bring them back to her own home." Thus "women also have places which are taboo to men. It is a fact that no men are allowed within this enclosure, and, I may add, only such women as have themselves been born there have the right of entry. A mother who has given birth there, but was not herself born there, is rigorously excluded excepting during the period of her confinement. It is for this reason that the place is called 'the birth enclosure,' [3] *hu ni-ar na woruan*. . . . It is quite simply a native lying-in ward." [4]

Special interest attaches to the name by which this enclosure is called. The term *hu ni-ar* is in fact composed of two words, *hu* which I have recorded in Vao as *hu-hu*, meaning "to suckle" or "to be suckled," [5] and *ni-ar* meaning "a fence." *Woruan* is clearly another spelling for the word

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 230.
[2] Presumably of the women in labour.
[3] "*Enclos de la naissance.*"
[4] "*Maternité.*"
[5] See p. 178. Compare Mota *hu-hu*, "to give suck."

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woroan discussed in later chapters. This is the nominal form of the verb *wor*, widely used in this part of Melanesia as meaning "to come forth," and in a special sense "to come forth from a woman," and so "to be born." In a more technical sense still, the word *wor* is used in Ambrim as a noun meaning "marriage section," in the sense explained on p. 97, and on Vao the word *woroan* is used in a number of ways, one of which appears to be "matrilineal descent group." [1] It is probably in this sense that the word is used here, for it will be noted that it is the "matrons" of Pete-hul and Togh-vanu who own these special Lodges. In other words, this rather obscure statement appears to indicate that ownership is not in the hands of women born in the village, who all marry elsewhere, but, on the contrary, in those of married women who do *not* belong by birth to the double-village in question. It would appear, both from this and from the fact that "only such women who have been born there [i.e. in this enclosure] have the right of entry," that these Lodges are not patrilineal but matrilineal institutions and represent a survival, despite the existing patrilocal organisation, of the former system of overt matrilineal descent of which traces are still to be found in the terminology of kinship.[2] This supposition is supported by Speiser's report that special houses in which women give birth are found also in the matrilineal islands of Oba and Maewo and in North Raga, but not in the patrilineal districts of South Raga or in Ambrim and Malekula.[3] Such Women's Lodges no longer exist in Atchin, where the matrilineal element in the kinship system is much weaker than it is on Vao.

Gardens

As has already been pointed out,[4] each village possesses its own tracts of land on the mainland of Malekula, where the main gardens are, and to which the natives travel daily in their canoes except during hurricanes and at times of special ritual activity. Each village has its own beach, or section of beach, on Vao, and its corresponding landing-place on the mainland. In addition to the mainland gardens, each village also possesses its share of uninhabited land on Vao. This land, however, like that on all the Small Islands, is largely given over to pigs, which roam around the villages, so that but little cultivation takes place there, and those plots that are used for gardening must be heavily fenced. Exigencies of time did not permit me to make a detailed study of land tenure on Vao, as I did on Atchin, and for all matters dealing with this and with agriculture, the seasons and the calendar, the reader is referred to my forthcoming volumes on that island. There the only gardens made on the Small Island itself are of a ritual nature. All essential cultivation takes place on the Malekulan mainland.

[1] See pp. 133, 138. [2] See p. 126. [3] Speiser, 3, p. 282. [4] See p. 25.